

# Media Release

## Yavapai County Sheriff's Office

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**February 8, 2016**

### *Search and Rescue Call leads to 4 Separate Rescues by Volunteers*

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On February 4, 2016, around 4:30 pm, an Oregon man called to report that a California man was stuck in deep snow on Senator Highway (Forest Road 52) north of Palace Station – approximately 17 miles south of Prescott. The California man was in a Cadillac Escalade and had 7 dogs with him but no working cell phone. Sometime later, the caller told YCSO dispatchers that he and his girlfriend were now stuck in the snow. Using the caller's cell phone location from the 911 call, a deputy started down Senator Highway with the limited information and intermittent cell phone contact. When the deputy's progress was halted by the snow about 1.5 miles from the stranded subjects, the Yavapai County Search and Rescue Team (YCSRT) 4x4 Unit was called out.

When the 4x4 Unit was about 1 mile from the 2 stranded vehicles, two men were discovered stuck near the top of a hill at Senator Highway and Poland Rd. They had been stranded for hours after attempting a drive to Crown King. With help from 4x4 Unit personnel, their vehicle was dug out of the snow allowing them to return home.



Left photo– stranded Toyota and Cadillac as found with rescue vehicle in foreground. Right photo - YCSRT personnel assist stranded motorist providing gas, any necessary medical aid along with food and water.

The 4x4 Unit continued south on Senator Hwy and made it to within less than a mile of the original group, but were unable to get any closer. Dispatchers contacted Oregon man and learned the group chose to stay put until the next day. They had sufficient food and water and were able to start a warming fire enabling an overnight stay even with temperatures in the teens.

While travelling out of the area pending a second rescue attempt the following day, the YCSRT 4x4 Unit came upon another stranded motorist. The motorist, a college student, spun out on Senator

Highway after rounding a corner too fast and struck a snow bank at the edge of a 60 foot drop off. With one of the truck's tires hanging off the side, he was unable to move the vehicle safely. Several friends were called but their vehicles were not equipped to handle the conditions. Eventually a tow truck responded from Prescott and pulled the student out while YCSRT members remained on scene to assist as needed.

The next morning, February 5, 2016, the YCSRT Quad Unit eventually reached the Oregon couple and California man. After a quick assessment, they found that the Oregon couple's vehicle, a Toyota 4 Runner, could be freed from the snow/mud allowing the couple to drive away. The stranded California man driving the Cadillac Escalade was loaded up, along with his 7 dogs, in rescue vehicles for transportation back to Prescott. The Cadillac Escalade was not drivable as the rear tires were shredded and displaced on the rim. The vehicle was scheduled for tow at a later date.

Lesson – it is well publicized that this portion of Senator Highway can be very treacherous and in many cases, unpassable, in deep snow conditions. Planning ahead and doing detailed research could have prevented these incidents if the warnings were known. And some vehicles, no matter how well equipped and driven, are simply not able to overcome such obstacles.

*\*\* Over the last several months, YCSRT, Southern YCSRT, Verde Search and Rescue and Jeep Posse members/volunteers have been involved in numerous rescues throughout Yavapai County. These volunteers often risk their own lives for complete strangers. Sheriff Mascher and the Forest Patrol deputies who oversee these rescues remain extremely grateful for their dedication and service. \*\**

**Citizens can contact the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office with information or questions at 928-771-3260 or the YCSO website:**  
[www.ycsoaz.gov](http://www.ycsoaz.gov)